

**ICHLA Civil Rights Committee Meeting  
Indiana Government Center-South RM 25  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
July 17, 2006**

**Committee Members:**

Christine Cde Baca, Civil Rights Commission/ICHLA Commissioner  
Chief Thomas Fautz, South Bend Police Department  
Maria Wildridge, Marion County Prosecutor's Office  
Azalea Deford, Marion County Prosecutor's Office  
Ruben Marté, Indiana State Police  
Tony Simpson, Indiana State Police  
Ed Cohn, National Major Gang Task Force  
Captain Jim Zamora, Fort Wayne Police Department  
Byron Alston, Save the Youth (Indianapolis)

**ICHLA Staff:**

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director  
Laura Barrett, Civil Rights/Education Research  
Ryan Marques, Business/Economic Development Research

**I. Welcome, Introductions**

Amy Mendoza welcomed all committee members. She explained the Commission's Strategic Plan and the responsibilities of the Civil Rights Committee. The Commission formed this committee to better identify Indiana's issues involving Hispanic/Latino gangs. The Commission has been conducting gang research in regards to gang prevention models and programs developed in other states. Amy Mendoza asked all committee members to give a brief introduction.

**II. Explanation of Civil Rights Committee & Member Responsibilities**

Amy Mendoza informed the committee members that the Commission began meeting in late 2004. The first report of findings/recommendations to the Governor/Legislature was written in early 2006. She explained how the Commission completes many activities through out the year, including research and input from the committee meetings and public forums/town hall meetings. Amy Mendoza mentioned that there was a lot concern about gang issues coming from the public forums.

Amy Mendoza asked all committee members to review the Civil Rights Committee's Action Steps from the Strategic Plan. She explained that the Commission would like to develop partnerships with all committee members and compile information into a committee report to be submitted to the Governor/Legislature by the end of the year. This report will include information on initiatives that are already in place within each committee member's area. The Commission would like to identify the working efforts across the state, including recommendations for legislation.

Amy Mendoza acknowledged the "gang-related" legislation already in place within the State of Indiana. Most of Indiana's anti-gang legislation is not reflective of other states.

Many states like California, Illinois and New York have experienced the gang issues a lot longer than Indiana. The Commission's staff is looking at those states and learning from their legislation and implemented programs.

Amy Mendoza discussed some of the action steps. The Commission would like to report on the gang-related issues within both rural and urban areas of the state. All of the Commission's committees identify prevention programs and recommend model programs that are currently successful within the state.

Amy Mendoza asked committee members to share their input, resources and contacts to make the Civil Rights Committee successful. She said, "We really want to work together as a Committee to put forth the best recommendations possible." She asked that the Committee create a written report to the Commission by November/December, which will then be submitted to the Governor early 2007.

### **III. Input on current gang prevention, awareness and other related initiatives**

Amy Mendoza asked all committee members to discuss their agency's local gang initiatives. She explained the makeup of the committee. The Civil Rights Committee members include individuals from regional areas, educators, police departments, correctional facilities. There have not been many anti-gang task forces formed across the state; the Commission would like to identify those in existence.

Ruben Marté said that the Indiana State Police does not have a gang task or a program unit that targets gang issues. The Indiana State Police will become involved with gang issues only when called upon. They have been assisting many rural area school corporations involving gang prevention, where they have been trying to educate the parents, teachers and students. The Indiana State Police is willing to assist the Commission as much as possible; they do not cover larger cities such as Fort Wayne and South Bend.

Chief Thomas Fautz mentioned that South Bend has a focus group formed in the Latino areas, identifying several leaders from the Hispanic population. These leaders have met with the South Bend Police Department to help identify any Latino gang problems. The neighboring city of Goshen has experienced a few recent gang-related homicides. He discussed MS-13 activities and recruitments within the Goshen area. South Bend has not experienced a lot of Latino gang issues, rather black street gang activities. Chief Fautz said that the Latin Kings are the most commonly known Latino gang within the South Bend area. South Bend is new to the MS-13 and recognized plenty of MS-13 graffiti in schools. South Bend has had a history of mostly black street gangs. The City of South Bend does not currently have a Hispanic officer on their gang unit, but would like to add someone soon. Chief Fautz acknowledged that the South Bend Police Department recently met with their bilingual instructors for the school corporation in an attempt to share networking/gang intelligence information. He explained how South Bend is still in the beginning stages of dealing with gangs issues.

Both Maria Wildridge and Azalea Ford from the Marion County Prosecutor's office joined the committee meeting and formally introduced themselves.

Byron Alston also joined the committee meeting and introduced himself as the Executive Director of Save the Youth, located in Indianapolis.

Amy Mendoza welcomed the new committee members and briefly reviewed the provided Civil Rights Committee Strategic Plan.

Captain Jim Zamora confirmed that the Fort Wayne Police Department has an officer solely designated to gather gang intelligence. The Fort Wayne area has also experienced an increase in Latino gang activity within the last 5-7 years. He explained that non-traditional, "splinter groups" are increasingly prevalent. Many kids are starting out in a traditional gang and then begin to splinter off into their own group. Both Latino and black gang members are committing more violent acts. These kids are taking shots at each other. Captain Zamora said, "Whenever they see each other on a street, they are going to shoot at each other, period."... "We've had instances where our officers are caught in a cross fire."... "These kids are shooting at each other through us; it's that bad." The Fort Wayne Police Department has dedicated an officer to try to identify a lot of these kids, using different names. They also developed a local data base. Captain Zamora said that they have been seeing a lot of mobility within the Latino gangs. A gang may be in town for a month or two months, then drop out of site, and then return back to the same town. The City of Fort Wayne has been experiencing Chicago, Detroit, South Bend and North West Ohio gang traffic.

Christine Cde Baca asked if the established gangs were made up of older or out of school-aged members.

Chief Fautz explained how most gang members are recruited by their older brothers and relatives already involved in the gang lifestyle. These family members have been around a lot longer, while the younger members tend to follow. He explained how South Bend's gangs are not well-organized gangs. At one time, South Bend experienced a well-organized gang, however, indicted most of that leadership with the help of a long-term investigation involving the FBI. South Bend now has smaller, neighborhood clicks. Chief Fautz informed committee members that both Fort Wayne and South Bend will be sharing more information more often since they began working a lot of initiatives out of the US Attorney's Office, which provided some funding under "Project Safe Neighborhood." The US Attorney's Office is trying to link up a data base between the different cities. They call it a Hide a Group out of North West Indiana. Unfortunately, this group did not share a lot of information in the past. The US Attorney's Office is trying to link the cities all together through "McLachlan", to allow for easier sharing of information. Chief Fautz feels that this will be a great resource to partner with other cities. He explained how some gang members can simply drop out of site in one city and easily relocate in another city, doing exactly the same thing. Chief Fautz said that the key component is to lower our sight to try and get in at an earlier age. There must be great training, such as working closely with parents, educating them and working with school

corporations in identifying problems early on. South Bend is attempting to get a program initiated called Show Cap. The Kokomo Police Department uses a similar program. Chief Fautz assured committee members that many police departments across the country have been using this program to identify kids in crisis early on. South Bend has been investing a lot of their money there since suppression is very short term. He said, "Suppression a really small band aid."... "It really takes community involvement." South Bend has also had a real problem with minority recruitment. They have done better recruiting within the Hispanic community than they have within the black community. Chief Fautz explained how South Bend would like to see more bilingual officers in an attempt to make a better impact.

Amy Mendoza asked if the prevention efforts were just now starting.

Chief Fautz said that these efforts have been going for a little while. He said, "Until these kids get older, you can't really measure the efforts." Chief Fautz mentioned that two years ago, South Bend added school resource officers into their intermediate schools; they are hoping that these officers will have some impact later on.

Christine Cde Baca said that the band aided things will not improve anything until you get to the level of prevention with the younger children. She agreed that we must get them when they are younger.

Chief Fautz explained how there is not a whole lot of trust for the police in the Latino communities. He tries to reassure individuals that the police are not immigration and are there to serve you, solve problems and provide services by policing. Chief Fautz said that South Bend has been developing more quality interactions with younger students and are getting to know the parents as well. They would like to build better relationships with the community.

Amy Mendoza acknowledged a lack of funding for more resources such as after-school programs. She mentioned how most crimes occur between 3pm-6pm. She said, "That's when after school programs should be available."

Azalea DeFord said that we should bombard the schools now with preventative programs. The kids in elementary schools are constantly being recruited into gangs. She spoke about a mostly Hispanic school on the Westside of Indianapolis. Azalea DeFord said that there are so many cases from that area. Hispanic/Latino families have a lack of health insurance and main resources. She said, "These children are being underserved." Many of these children are from different countries, but most are US citizens. She said, "Everyone is experiencing an impact; it's overwhelming." She urged for something to be done before the problem worsens.

Chief Fautz agreed that it is imperative to get down to that elementary level.

Azalea DeFord explained how sometimes kids feel the need to join a gang in order to fit in with the surrounding racial tensions. She stated that there is no acculturation. Kids are

dropping out of school. Azalea DeFord said that there is a lack of parental supervision, as most Hispanic/Latino parents work 2-3 shifts.

Christine Cde Baca said, "You have the younger students not getting the nurturing at home and go to the school reading below grade level? She asked where the students might go instead. Christine Cde Baca agreed that these children will go to the place where they feel they belong. Street gangs become their sense of belonging.

Amy Mendoza asked if most gang activities are criminal or less severe.

Captain Zamora assured the committee that gang activities have become increasingly criminal including vandalism, spray painting, burglaries and robberies. The Fort Wayne area often sees 4-5 different young gang members vandalizing the city, some as young as 9 yrs old. Captain Zamora said, "You can only imagine what sort of environment he comes from, to be at that stage in his life at 9 yrs old." Fort Wayne gang activities are almost all criminal. The social club issues do not involve the police as much as the criminal aspect of it. Gang members and their affiliates hang out on corners and congregate on the weekends on inner city corners. Captain Zamora has seen 500-600 people on one corner hanging out, until shots were fired. This is almost a weekend occurrence. These areas are monitored closely, but continue to take place.

Laura Barrett asked committee members if they had a neighborhood watch similar to Marion County's Safe Streets Task Force.

Captain Zamora said that Fort Wayne has had a few active watch groups in the past. Most are no longer active in those high risk areas for obvious reasons. Residents do not want to become a target either.

Laura Barrett asked if there were gang crisis hotlines available to anonymous callers.

Byron Alston discussed the racial tensions that the Lawrence Police Department has been experiencing. He said that the Hispanics send younger kids out in the streets to spray gang graffiti. Byron Alston mentioned the three recent shootings in the Lawrence area. He discussed how Hispanics are intimidating other Hispanics. Hispanic students at the North West High School have been threatening others to join a gang or they beat them up. Byron Alston said, "The school system is not educated on how to deal with those situations." The kids can find no other resources or strongholds but to join a gang. Byron Alston also commented on how the Black Expo weekend was supposed to be a retaliation weekend for some gang members. Every Hispanic that came down to Black Expo came in groups. Byron Alston said, "Our main thing is that we have to educate the community on how to identify someone and how to deal with them."... "That is the problem." He said, "The Hispanics have a code, but they understand what loyalty means." He commented, "If you show it, they kind of break down." Byron Alston was pleased to announce that the Deputy Chief has a relationship now with a leader in the gang. They are attempting to set up a meeting with a main leader of the MS-13 next week. Byron Alston explained how the violence near Post Road has gotten so bad, that people are

simply moving out. He said, "It's blacks and Hispanics going at each other."... "We are coming up with a problem that no one is educated on." Byron Alston concluded that everyone should educate people on what to look for, how to identify it and how to act on it. Byron Alston felt that most neighborhood associations do not know how to deal with the problem.

Ed Cohn confirmed that many gangs are now moving to rural areas. He felt that anonymous calls from the elderly are equally important. Ed Cohn said, "That is what is missing." Someone who notices something is important.

Laura Barrett said that Indianapolis Assistant Police Chief James Wyatt commented on the irony of the Hispanic family that was murdered on the East side. The entire neighborhood was a "rainbow community." Everyone was aware of what would happen, yet no one came forward.

Azalea DeFord said that the problem is "how are they going to communicate?" She explained how this is obviously a huge problem at all levels, not with just gangs itself.

Laura Barrett discussed how new immigrants have become the prime target for gang recruitment, terrorism and other security threats. Gang activity was at its highest peak in 1996. Additional gang prevention programs were then created, causing gang involvement to decrease between the years 1996-2005. Because of recent funding restrictions and various other factors, gang involvement has since increased as of 2006.

Christine Cde Baca assured the committee that any social problem it will vary up and down.

Ed Cohn mentioned his former work experience with the Indiana Department of Corrections. He used to see pictures of kids flashing gang signs at the ages of 2-3 years old. He explained that this may be all these kids know. Ed Cohn said that these kids grow up with it and understand it. He stressed the importance of getting involved with the families, as this problem is very deep.

Byron Alston said that the Latino communities bless their kids in with the gangs. He feels that education is very important. Groups are disrespecting each other. The education piece must be put out. He said, "It will get us on top of what we are dealing with." The MS-13 goes far back. Byron Alston assured the committee that if a strong leader comes to Indianapolis, then the city will have a serious problem, as it will be hard to regain control.

Chief Fautz said, "We are a couple generations into this." The parents of these gang members have been brought up with the same culture. They may be former gang members and still have cousins or relatives involved. He agreed that it would be very tough to get through to some of these parents.

Byron Alston explained the concept of choices and consequences. He said, “We need to put it a language that they can actually see.” He gave an example of how children react based on what they know. Byron Alston saw a man teaching a program by using a drawing. The kids saw the meaning through the drawing and caught on quickly. For some kids, no one has showed them anything different. Gangs might be all they know.

Chief Fautz agreed that this is where after school programs become crucial. Children will go back to an environment where it is reinforced and becomes even stronger.

Azalea DeFord said that many students who have documentation problems lack the ability to go to college; this becomes a huge problem overall.

Chief Fautz mentioned the 50% dropout rate and how students aren’t getting to school, or are no longer in school. He asked, “How will they make money?”... “What’s the alternative?” Crime usually becomes the alternative.

Ed Cohn agreed that a component is lacking. He said that a lot of superintendents do not acknowledge that their schools have gang problems. He urged gang educators to teach not only the administration but the teachers, bus drivers, maintenance personnel, food service and etc. school workers who come in contact with students on a regular basis. He felt that all of the school staff should be trained on gang awareness, as there are 7-8 different components in an educational system at different levels. Ed Cohn said that he has received calls from a teacher asking for a follow-up because the administration will not complete it. Ed Cohn urged to settle this issue immediately, as the administration cannot do it all. Ed Cohn suggested that the school resources be available to students between the hours of 4pm-9pm. This will help cut down on a few hours of crime.

Chief Fautz agreed that the South Bend School Corporation remains in denial of gang activity.

Ed Cohn felt that educators are few and far between.

Laura Barrett discussed the huge issue with gang denial. She said that you must be careful in recognizing a care problem, as publicizing a particular gang might bring more attention/power to the gang itself. This is a sensitive issue.

Ed Cohn felt that gang denial is a community problem. He suggested that businesses and clergy members offer time/financial resources to help solve this problem, as it is imperative. Ed Cohn said, “It takes everybody, not just social and law enforcement agencies.”

Amy Mendoza said that the Mayors Latino office recently gave a workshop on the MS-13 gang and included a workshop for the parents. Amy Mendoza is pleased to hear from the committee that the most important thing is prevention and then suppression, as they cannot be avoided. Amy Mendoza thanked the committee members for their ideas and knowledge. She mentioned recent research found on Indiana gang-related legislation.

She felt that most states have been more proactive in terms of developing legislation than the federal government itself. She asked committee members to review the provided handout on Indiana's legislation. Amy Mendoza discussed the last page that outlined ideas for a pilot program. This program would focus on implementing an anti-gang program, regarding prevention, suppression, training and education. This legislation appears to have never been passed. She asked committee members to come up with some sort of anti-gang program legislation. Amy Mendoza also asked Ed Cohn if the National Major Gang Task Force had developed a model program or suggestions to be considered.

Ed Cohn said that the National Major Gang Task Force (NMGTF) has created programs for only jails and prisons but not for the community itself. The Task Force is trying to use technical assistance, training or consultation to help them. Their intention is not to try and run someone else's agency. The NMGTF develops policy for prisons and jails out of how to work with gang members, including basic foundations. These facilities may tailor the program to fit their needs. Ed Cohn also mentioned that the NMGTF took it another step and developed a policy for renunciation. They even work with people on the streets on an individual basis. Ed Cohn discussed an online List Server provided by the NMGTF that is available to community. The memberships make up some of the following: Agencies, law enforcement, criminal justice, educators and military. Ed Cohn explained how this list serve reaches individuals across the nation. If someone comes up with something, someone on the list serve will respond to them within hours. The NMGTF tries to break down communications between agencies.

Laura Barrett commented on a similar List Server called the "Gang Info. List;" it is provided by the National Alliance of Gang Investigator's Association (NAGIA).

Ed Cohn mentioned that the NMGTF is affiliated with the NAGIA.

Amy Mendoza asked committee members for more information on female involvement with gangs. The Commission has heard a lot of concerns about this at public forums.

Azalea DeFord gave an example of how a mother of a 12 year-old girl let her daughter become involved with her 25 year old boyfriend in a gang.

Ed Cohn explained how women used to be there for psychological/sexual support. Now they are using women to gain information on other gangs.

Laura Barrett said that many gangs are becoming more difficult to identify by race/gender. They are becoming increasingly multicultural, including both female and male members.

Byron Alston explained how many gangs they have to "sex in" the girls. Girls used to be accepted into that world. He said that girls are now flashing colors more often than the guys.



Laura Barrett talked about an article of a hate crime that had recently occurred in California. This article states that California is looking to pass hate crime legislation, where the penalties are much harsher. She promised to share this article with the committee via email.

Azalea DeFord would like to see multicultural mentoring programs. She expressed a need for more effective mentoring involving sports. She would like to see more sport programs implemented and tailored to needs of the community.

Laura Barrett mentioned that the Indianapolis Police Department is looking to become involved in a soccer program targeted towards Hispanic/Latino youth.

Amy Mendoza felt that those types of programs would be good to recommend as a committee. She asked that the committee think about recommendations for a mentoring program. Suggestions to plan / implement these ideas within the next year were made. Amy Mendoza agreed that this sort of change could be made through the Administration if not the Legislature. The program should be a community-based model. It must assist programs that already going on in the communities. She reminded committee members that efforts must not be repeated.

Azalea DeFord felt that no one is working together. She explained how everyone “needs money.” She said, “There is nothing being done.” Azalea DeFord discussed how many related efforts are being repeated. She would like to target the families. One family can bring other families. Azalea DeFord mentioned how these families in need of assistance will not be easy to target within a few years. She felt that this should be a huge effort to accomplish, as there is need for a consolidation. Azalea DeFord asked that all agencies combine efforts. She agreed that community-based efforts should be the target at all levels including churches, schools, law enforcement agencies and mentors. Azalea DeFord said, “Nothing is happening in Indianapolis.”

Ed Cohn felt that schools should be kept open. They have the resources. He said that football and basketball are not the answer to every kid. Ed Cohn said, “It’s a heck of a lot cheaper to keep those schools open at night than it is to pay the kids price and their dads price per day in a cell.” Ed Cohn reassured committee members that it has to cost something and has to come from somewhere. He said that you have to think about where you will get the most out of your money. Ed Cohn explained how it will cost the government a lot more per capita than it is to let the kid use the school facilities at night.

Amy Mendoza agreed that the committee must frame every issue. She mentioned the most recent recommendations made by the Driver’s License Committee. The Committee recommended a pilot program and completed an economic savings study that the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research developed. The Commission framed it for what the state would save. Amy Mendoza suggested that the Civil Rights Committee advocate for something similar with a recommended model program.

Ruben Martí asked that the committee set stages when dealing with suppression, intervention and prevention. He said, “Don’t shoot for too much at one time.” Ruben Martí explained how the Indiana State Police will not get involved until they are invited. When they are invited, it is their intention that people are willing to listen to them. He said that no mayor wants to say we have a gang problem unless they physically acknowledge it. Ruben Martí said that they give everything they can once they are asked. He wants to hear what teachers, pastors, community leaders and gang members have to say themselves. Ruben Martí mentioned a small community that was in need of their assistance. He said that the southern party of the state is “new territory” for gang activity. They are in need of help. Ruben Martí reminded committee members that mayors have tremendous power. They can dictate what is going on. Once they broke the barrier of the language and developed trust, the southern community was able to create a hotline in Spanish as well. Ruben Martí agreed that Hispanic outreach officers are a huge help. He also mentioned the importance of pastors and preachers. He assured committee members that “if you do it in stages you might see the actual progress.” He asked the committee not to take on too much at one time.

Amy Mendoza agreed with Ruben Martí. She explained how the Commission is trying to do that with the other committees. She said that everything on the Strategic Plan’s timeline is subject to change. The committee members are asked to communicate with the Commission on gang-related issues. Amy Mendoza assured committee members that setting stages for program models/recommendations is essential. She agreed to bring in the input from the mayors. She suggested that the committee review the Strategic Plan and discuss whether it is too much to be accomplished for this year’s goals.

Ed Cohn said that instant gratification is not possible. He assured the committee, “We are talking two years out.”

Amy Mendoza said that the Commission is attempting to get a sense of the most common gangs within the State of Indiana. This information was included in the committee packet. Amy Mendoza asked committee members for their feedback on the most prominent gangs and whether or not they might have become splinter gangs.

Captain Zamora said that traditionally, the Latin Kings have been the most common Hispanic gang. He felt that it is now hard to tell. Captain Zamora explained how splintering has occurred more recently and could be a generational thing.

Ed Cohn said that splintering is a national phenomenon. The younger gangs have become more aggressive and hostile.

Captain Zamora said that the Fort Wayne Police Department is currently tracking the splintering of gangs. These gangs might start as small as 6-8 members and might duplicate in number by joining another gang with a common goal, growing in size. Captain Zamora plans to invite Fort Wayne’s gang expert to the next committee meeting to share information. He said, “You have to understand the problem before we can solve it.”

Ruben Marté explained how a gang is like a corporation. A gang has a structure: There are the street people, the ones in the middle and then the ones who actually run the show. Indiana is experiencing splintering groups from Chicago. Ruben Marté said that the issue between Hispanics and blacks will continue happening. He said, “The six will become 12; and if we can’t get 12, then another gang will take them into their family until they are the most feared.” Ruben Marté mentioned an instance when gangs burned bodies to symbolize a message of “I’m coming down.” He explained how this phenomenon existed years ago, but is just now coming here. Now they are staying, not just coming. Ruben Marté asked the committee to select a pilot program and see what happens within a year or two. He mentioned how easily New York City, Chicago and California segregated similar pilot program sites. They had to target the problem. It has taken the State of California many years to get to where they are now. Ruben Marté said, “It’s a great beginning to see agencies gather together to do this.” However, he felt that a state agency trying to cover the whole state might be too difficult.

Ed Cohn discussed the growing number of gangs and security threats. They are coming together to stay one step ahead of the criminal justice agencies. Law enforcement is gaining on them. He said that they also see the need to communicate and gain on them.

Amy Mendoza mentioned the Institute for Intergovernmental Research and how they discussed California’s successful program. She said that it has taken years to become that way. Amy Mendoza also spoke about the La Raza Annual Conference that she recently attended that had a lot of information on California’s program. She would like the committee to discuss California’s program and Chicago’s program in more detail at a later time. She assured committee members that the Commission will only recommend pilot programs. The Commission is also very limited on funding and includes a staff of three. Amy Mendoza would like the committee to recommend something of a period of 1-2 years. Based on the program success, the Commission will have another committee monitor the process and develop something for the entire state.

Byron Alston said, “we must look at how aggressive do we think that they will be from two yrs from now.”... “We have to look at how together they will be.” Byron Alston explained how the gangs are coming together. Most of the gang task forces have just one resource officer or two.

Ed Cohn felt that the 9/11 incident took away funding from local problems and put it towards international security.

Laura Barrett discussed the gang problems in the military and how members are coming back better trained and more dangerous. There has also been American graffiti on the walls of Iraqi buildings.

#### **IV. Next Steps**

Amy Mendoza discussed the next steps for the Civil Rights Committee. She explained how the Commission staff will compile the committee meeting comments and report it back in writing. Committee members will receive an agenda prior to the next meeting. She asked committee members for agenda suggestions to be included in the next meeting.

Captain Zamora asked that the committee include someone from state level of education.

Laura Barrett informed the committee that several educators were indeed invited to participate with the committee. She explained how Christine Cde Baca will also act as a liaison between the Education Committee and the Civil Rights Committee. The Commission also has someone from the Department of Education serving on the Commission for their input.

Amy Mendoza agreed to focus for the next meeting on information from the Indiana Department of Education.

Ed Cohn asked if the State PTA was still in existence.

Laura Barrett mentioned how the gang issue in schools is also a concern of the Education Committee. These two committees will plan to work closely together.

Amy Mendoza informed the committee that she just joined as a new advisor to the State PTA. She commented how the State PTA appears not to be very well connected on the local level. She agreed to try to engage them with input. Amy Mendoza agreed with the suggestion to include more community people/educators to serve on the committee. The committee meeting minutes will be distributed via email prior to the next committee meeting. Amy Mendoza thanked the committee for their participation and urged them to contact her directly with any questions/concerns.

The ICHLA Civil Rights Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:50pm.